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ABSTRACT

While historically higher education has utilized many different planning paradigms and elements, two concepts (strategic planning and operational planning) can be presented as the major planning concepts into which the various paradigms can be placed. Starting in fall 1991, Seminole Community College developed a planning model which integrated strategic and operational planning with the production of college-wide measures of institutional effectiveness. The model has the following characteristics: (1) the institutional mission statement is the initiating point; (2) both strategic and operational planning are seen as separate processes linked through the mission statement; (3) organizational units perform both types of planning as they generate strategic as well as operational activities; (4) strategic planning generates a strategic plan as well as an annual plan which result in activities with effectiveness measures; (5) operational planning is reflected in statements of purpose by institutional areas which lead to day-to-day functions that result in operational activities with effectiveness measures; and (6) both strategic effectiveness measures as well as operational effectiveness measures become incorporated into one college-wide effectiveness/action document. The major effect of this Integrated Planning Effectiveness Model (IPEM) is to link planning and effectiveness together through the college mission statement. This action has the benefit of clarifying the institutional vision, avoiding duplication of effort, and improving utilization of staff time. (Author/AC)

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# IPEM: AN INTEGRATED PLANNING, EFFECTIVENESS MODEL

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**Abstract**

While historically, higher education has utilized many different planning paradigms and elements, two concepts (strategic planning and operational planning) can be presented as the major planning concepts into which the various paradigms and elements can be placed. Starting in the Fall of 1991, Seminole Community College developed a planning model which integrated strategic and operational planning with the production of college-wide measures of institutional effectiveness. The major effect of this model (IPEM) is to take what could be separate processes (planning and effectiveness) and link them together through the college mission statement. This action has the benefit of clarifying the institutional vision, avoiding duplication of effort, and improving utilization of staff time.

# IPEM: AN INTEGRATED PLANNING, EFFECTIVENESS MODEL

Aaron P. Donsky

## Introduction

This paper describes a model, now being used successfully, at a community college for integrating planning with the production of measures of institutional effectiveness. By integrating these two processes, the effort can bring more meaningfulness to both and avoid redundancy.

There are two key issues surrounding this integration. The first is the debate over the nature of planning itself and the second relates to the public policy creating the pressure for measures of institutional effectiveness.

## The Planning Issue

Wildavsky (1973) clarified the major planning debate over two decades ago when he noted:

*If Planning is Everything, Maybe Its Nothing. (pp. 127-153)*

He observed that formal planning processes were so all encompassing that they could not easily be separated from the other major organizational functions. As a result the formal planning that did occur on an institution-wide basis was not really as meaningful as the planning that occurred as a part of daily operational decisions. This operational level planning he called, "Incremental Planning". Wildavsky's work then, brought into the question the importance of formal planning as well as separated it from operational planning efforts.

This debate continues in the recent work of Schmidtlein (1989) who studied the formal planning processes in 256

institutions and noted that:

> *... the overwhelming majority of the comments offered by those interviewed suggested that the performance of most of the processes that had been in operation for several years were rather disappointing. (p.13)*

Shirley (1988) noted that educational institutions differed drastically in the types of planning methods and elements employed.

Winstead (1986) in an extensive study of planning models found 14 planning paradigms, many garnered from the industrial or military areas.

These fourteen included:

| Innovation | Added Dimension |
|---|---|
| Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting, and Budgeting (POSDCORB) | Planning as a Management Function |
| Formal Planning | Discrete Documentation of Planning |
| Long Range Planning | Extrapolation Forward and Use of a Planning Specialist |
| Master Planning | A Look at the Total Picture |
| Contingency Planning | Asking "What If" with Alternative Solutions |
| Systematic Planning | How Factors Interrelate |
| Program Planning and Budgeting Systems (PPBS) | Emphasis on Programmatic Information Rather Than Line Items |
| Program Evaluation Review Technique (PERT) | Network Analysis |
| Management by Objectives (MBO) | Emphasis on Results and Accountability |
| Delphi Studies | Consensus Building |
| Zero-Based Budgeting (ZBB) | Total Program Justifications |
| Futures Research | Alternative Scenarios |

To these fourteen we can add more recent trends such as TQM (Total Quality Management).

Despite the many different paradigms and planning elements that have been identified, the earlier major distinction between operational and strategic planning has been retained in current literature. Linsensky (1988), Shirley (1988) and others have presented the planning debate in terms of the distinction between these two approaches. Operational and Strategic Planning, then could be viewed as the categories into which the fourteen paradigms and related elements can be placed.

**The Effectiveness Issue**

Bogue (1993) has traced the shifts in public policy interests relative to higher education from expansion and equity of access in the 1960s and 1970s to quality concerns in the 1980s and finally to institutional effectiveness in the 1990s. He sees the effectiveness issue as occurring in an environment of state revenue decline. It shares the stage with concerns over measurable educational outcomes, accountability, and improvement of management.

Ewell (1993) noted the concern over institutional effectiveness came largely from state mandates. Prior to these mandates many of these states had not required regular program reviews. A number of the institutional recipients of these mandates were already involved in planning and goal setting exercises.

Institutional change is a frequent outcome of institutional effectiveness studies. Miller (1988) indicated in his studies of educational assessment strategies, which are often part of institutional effectiveness models, that assessment is often pursued very cautiously because of its potential for generating change.

Institutional effectiveness, then, has been pursued often separately from planning efforts and with little thought relative to its implications for change.

**Integration and All-Encompassing Models**

Educational institutions in the 1990s are facing both planning as well as effectiveness concerns. An integrated model addressing both may be the appropriate direction. Bogue (1993) put it well when he said:

> *Accountability reporting is a substantial requirement; it takes time and effort by institutions and state agencies to develop common definitions and reporting formats, and to collect, summarize, and reports as the basis for judgement about the adequacy of their higher education systems. Adequacy has to be judged against expectations and standards. Those states that have connected their accountability reporting to strategic plans and goals should have a more useful framework for judging adequacy than those who have not. (Bogue, p.12)*

There have been attempts to integrate planning and effectiveness into a single approach.

Muffo (1992) stressed the interrelationship among strategic planning, assessment, TQM and proposed an integrating philosophy. This attempt at integrating various planning strategies has been echoed by other authors. Shirley (1988) noted that:

> ...the strategic, operational, and unit-level decisions

> represent the destination points in any effective strategic planning venture. (p.10)

To strategic and operational level planning, Lisensky (1988) added assessment measures and feedback of these measures to goals and mission. Specifically, he stated:

> *...we could also say that healthy colleges and universities are alike in that they share certain characteristics that are missing or are imperfectly developed in their unhealthy counterparts. Among the most important of these characteristics are a clearly articulated and widely shared vision of what the institution wants to accomplish; a plan with which to move the institution where it needs to go; a means for collecting and using information for self-assessment and a willingness to engage in self-corrective action. (15)*

Wharton and Corak (1992) described the successful planning case study of Minot State involving a combination of strategic and long range planning, mission review, total campus involvement down to the unit level including operational planning/budgeting and an evaluation component.

Cope (1985) also attempted to combine different planning techniques into one model he called contextual planning. He envisioned integrating long-range planning, and strategic planning with administrative policy.

**The Model and Its Key Elements**

The integrated effectiveness, planning model that we are proposing (IPEM) has three key elements: strategic planning, operational planning, and effectiveness measures. Before examining the model as a whole, it is important to describe each element.

Strategic Planning

George Keller (1983) in his now classic work, Academic

Strategy, described strategic planning in the following way: it is a systematic way of assessing an institution's relationship with its external environment, relating internal strengths/ weaknesses to external threats and opportunities. It contrasts with more traditional forms of long-range planning that typically project direction for an institution as a linear extension of the past.

Cope (1985) further stressed the external nature of strategic planning by referring to it as outside-in planning. He saw it as leading to strategic choices which alter an institution's relationship to its environment. These strategic choices then serve as a framework for goals and objectives which can effect other levels of planning and action.

Shirley (1988) described the key elements of strategic planning as analysis of external environment, assessment of institutional strengths/weaknesses, role of values, and the matching of congruent findings. More specifically:

> ...*External Environment. The measurement of external opportunities, threats, and constraints should identify both the positive and the negative aspects of the outside environment. Chief among the factors to be weighed are economic, demographic, political, legal, technological, and social conditions and changes.*
>
> ...*Institutional Strengths and Weakness. The assessment of internal strengths and weaknesses usually centers on six areas: human capital, financial resources, quality of facilities, program, image, and the character of the*

*organization. The purpose of this assessment is to ascertain specifically what an institution can and what it cannot do.*

*... Role of Values. The analysis of personal values as a component in decision making has not received enough attention in the literature or the practice of planning. Personal values, which include one's "conception of the desirable," are critical determinants of personal and group responses to the overall strategic plan. Among other things, values define what groups and individuals want to do as the institution moves through time.*

*... Matching Findings. The crucial step in the analysis of external institutional strengths and weaknesses, and relevant personal values is the matching of congruent findings. For example, the external analysis may reveal significant opportunities for which there are insufficient institutional capabilities. There might also be points of institutional strength that no longer match external trends. Or there could be a match of institutional strengths with external opportunities, while the values of key individuals or groups point toward an alternative course for the college or university. (p. 10-11)*

**Operational Planning**

Shirley (1988) noted that in this level of planning, attempts are made to channel institutional activities in the areas of finances, facilities, enrollment, human resources, and organization within boundaries of the vision established by the strategic plan.

Lisensky (1988) further clarified operational planning by suggesting that the view point is local rather than institutional. It relies on individual units to gather and

interpret information. He saw a need for both a strategic and an operational viewpoint.

> *...it is important that an institution not rely solely on planning at the unit level as a means to shape its future. Colleges and universities need both operational and strategic planning. Both kinds of planning work incrementally, and each needs to possess access to data about the external environment. What, then, is the difference between them? The difference is the unit of analysis. For strategic planning, the unit of analysis is the entire institution. While units need to identify their specific goals, the central administration must determine the strategic issues for the entire institution: this is the process called strategic planning. (p.17)*

Effectiveness Measures

The League for Innovation in the Community College (1990) has defined institutional effectiveness as how well a community college performs its missions relative to the needs of the constituency. Effectiveness measures are then unique to each institution.

**Ewell (1985) pointed out that:**

> *...there is no single right way of measuring educational outcomes, because different kinds of outcomes are the result of different educational experiences and interpretation. (p.115)*

Ewell (1985) further reinforced the relationship of effectiveness measures to mission by stating:

> *...the form and content of assessment should be consistent with the institution's distinctive mission and educational objectives. (p.115)*

Ewell (1985) also stressed that the level of analysis for measuring effectiveness should be less than the institution as a whole. In other words, while effectiveness indicators relate back to the objective missions of an institution, they result from activities at the unit level.

Lisensky (1983) linked effectiveness measures to the planning process as such:

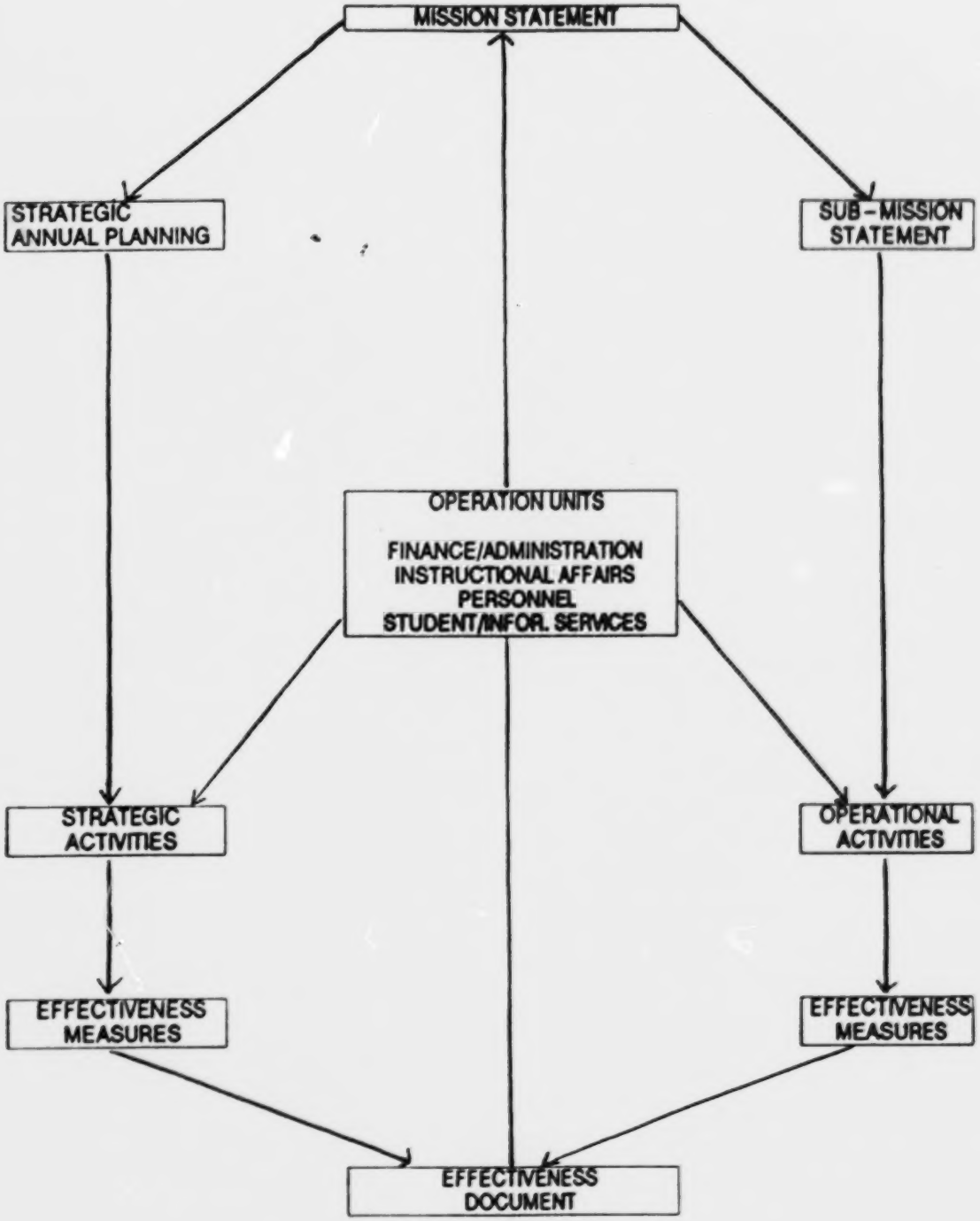
> *...evaluation, or assessment, is a vital part of this process. Evaluation must discover what works and why. It must determine what is not working and what should be done about it. Institutions need to evaluate their activity on a continuing basis and fine-tune their plans wherever assessment recommends. (p.15)*

**The Model**

This paper proposes an integrated planning approach with three key elements: strategic planning, operational planning, and effectiveness measures. The model has the following characteristics (see figure 1 for illustration)

FIGURE 1

AN INTEGRATED PLANNING EFFECTIVENESS MODEL (IPEM)



(1) The institutional mission statement is the initiating point.

(2) Both strategic and operational planning are seen as separate processes linked through the mission statement.

(3) Organizational units perform both types of planning a they generate strategic as well as operational activities.

(4) Strategic planning generates a strategic plan as well as an annual plan which result in activities with effectiveness measures.

(5) Operational planning is reflected in statements of purpose (sub-mission statements) by institutional areas which lead to day-to-day functions that result in operational activities with effectiveness measures.

(6) Both strategic effectiveness measures as well as operational effectiveness measures become incorporated into one institution-wide effectiveness/ action document.

**THE IMPACT OF THE MODEL**

The major effect of the IPEM is to take what could be separate processes, planning and effectiveness, and link them together through the college mission statement. This action has the benefits of avoiding duplication of effort and improving utilization of staff time. Additional results of its application can include:

* a clarification of institutional vision by directly relating both planning and effectiveness measures to the mission statement

* an increase in the depth of the planning by combining both strategic and operational efforts into one process

* a production of more meaningful effectiveness measures that are grounded in the goals and purposes of the institution.

Perhaps the most telling impact of a model is its real world application. In its two years of utilization, at Seminole Community College, there has been a resurgence of the planning process, resulting in the production of a strategic plan, 2 annual plans, and an effectiveness document.

**Conclusion**

While historically, higher education has utilized many different planning paradigms and elements, two concepts, strategic planning and operational planning, can be presented as the major planning concepts into which the various paradigms and elements can be placed. These two major concepts can, in turn, be integrated with the generation of effectiveness measures into one model leading to an efficient and meaningful may to relate an institution's purpose, goals, and outcome measurements. Ernest Boyer, in his work, College: The Undergraduate Experience in America said it best:

> *...measuring the outcome of a College education, in the end, is an assessment of the institution. And only as we gain greater clarity about the mission of the college - about the purpose that the functions are to serve - will we have the standards against which to measure our procedures. Only as college leaders clarify goals will they have the confidence to proceed with any form of evaluation. (p.262)*

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